

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 1771
OFFERED BY MR. ENGEL OF NEW YORK**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Divided Families Re-
3 unification Act”.

**4 SEC. 2. CONSULTATIONS ON REUNITING KOREAN AMERI-
5 CANS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN NORTH
6 KOREA.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

9 (1) The division of the Korean Peninsula into
10 South Korea and North Korea separated thousands
11 of Koreans from family members.

12 (2) Since the signing of the Agreement Con-
13 cerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at
14 Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as
15 the “Korean War Armistice Agreement”), there has
16 been little to no contact between Korean Americans
17 and family members who remain in North Korea.

1 (3) North Korea and South Korea first agreed
2 to reunions of divided families in 1985 and have
3 since held 21 face-to-face reunions and multiple
4 video link reunions.

5 (4) Those reunions have subsequently given ap-
6 proximately 24,500 Koreans the opportunity to
7 briefly reunite with loved ones.

8 (5) The most recent family reunions between
9 North Korea and South Korea took place in August
10 2018 and did not include any Korean Americans.

11 (6) The United States and North Korea do not
12 maintain diplomatic relations and certain limitations
13 exist on Korean Americans participating in face-to-
14 face reunions.

15 (7) According to the most recent census, more
16 than 1,700,000 people living in the United States
17 are of Korean descent.

18 (8) The number of first generation Korean and
19 Korean American family members divided from fam-
20 ily members in North Korea is rapidly diminishing
21 given the advanced age of those family members.
22 More than 3,000 elderly South Koreans die each
23 year without having been reunited with their family
24 members.

1 (9) Many Korean Americans with family mem-
2 bers in North Korea have not seen or communicated
3 with those family members in more than 60 years.

4 (10) The inclusion of Korean American families
5 in the reunion process would constitute a positive
6 humanitarian gesture by the Government of North
7 Korea.

8 (11) Section 1265 of the National Defense Au-
9 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law
10 110–181; 122 Stat. 407) required the President to
11 submit to Congress a report on “efforts, if any, of
12 the United States Government to facilitate family re-
13 unions between United States citizens and their rel-
14 atives in North Korea”.

15 (12) The position of Special Envoy on North
16 Korean Human Rights Issues has been vacant since
17 January 2017, although the President is required to
18 appoint a Senate-confirmed Special Envoy to fill this
19 position in accordance with section 107 of the North
20 Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C.
21 7817).

22 (13) In the report of the Committee on Appro-
23 priations of the House of Representatives accom-
24 panying H.R. 3081, 111th Congress (House Report
25 111–187), the Committee urged “the Special Rep-

1 representative on North Korea Policy, as the senior of-
2 ficial handling North Korea issues, to prioritize the
3 issues involving Korean divided families and to, if
4 necessary, appoint a coordinator for such families”.

5 (b) CONSULTATIONS.—

6 (1) CONSULTATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA.—

7 The Secretary of State, or a designee of the Sec-
8 retary, should consult with officials of South Korea,
9 as appropriate, on potential opportunities to reunite
10 Korean American families with family members in
11 North Korea from which such Korean American
12 families were divided after the signing of the Korean
13 War Armistice Agreement, including potential oppor-
14 tunities for video reunions for Korean Americans
15 with such family members.

16 (2) CONSULTATIONS WITH KOREAN AMERI-

17 CANS.—The Special Envoy on North Korean Human
18 Rights Issues of the Department of State should
19 regularly consult with representatives of Korean
20 Americans who have family members in North
21 Korea with respect to efforts to reunite families di-
22 vided after the signing of the Korean War Armistice
23 Agreement, including potential opportunities for
24 video reunions for Korean Americans with such fam-
25 ily members.

1 (3) NO ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF AP-
2 PROPRIATIONS.—No additional amounts are author-
3 ized to be appropriated to the Department of State
4 to carry out consultations under this subsection.

5 (c) ADDITIONAL MATTER IN REPORT.—The Sec-
6 retary of State, acting through the Special Envoy on
7 North Korean Human Rights Issues, shall include in each
8 report required under section 107(d) of the North Korean
9 Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817(d)), a de-
10 scription of the consultations described in subsection (b)
11 conducted during the year preceding the submission of
12 each report required under such section 107(d).

